

ABORTION

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The following is one of the lessons from Way of Life Literature's *One-Year Discipleship Course*.

Introduction

Abortion is legal in 54 countries today. It has been legal in America since the infamous Roe vs. Wade Supreme Court decision in 1973. Worldwide, roughly 46 million babies are destroyed in the womb each year. About one in five pregnancies end in abortion. The overwhelming majority of abortions are done as a means of birth control and convenience.

God's people are obligated to honor God's Law more than man's. Though abortion is legal, that does not mean that it is right in God's eyes (Acts 5:29).

By 21 days the baby's heart begins to beat and the blood flows through its body. At 45 days the tiny baby's brain waves can be detected. By 8 to 9 weeks the eyelids have begun forming and hair appears. By 9 or 10 weeks it sucks its thumb, jumps, frowns, swallows, and moves its tongue. By 12 or 13 weeks the baby has fingernails and its own unique fingerprints; all arteries are present, vocal chords are complete; the baby can cry and recoils from pain. At 14 weeks the mother begins to feel the baby moving inside of her. At 15 weeks the baby has fully-formed taste buds. At 16 weeks, it has eyebrows and eyelashes, and it can grasp with its hands, kick, and even somersault. At 20 weeks the baby can hear and recognize its mother's voice.

The most common types of abortion are the following:

Suction Aspiration. This is the most common method during the first trimester of pregnancy. The tiny infant is literally sucked out of the womb by a powerful pump with a suction force nearly 30 times that of a home vacuum cleaner. The procedure tears the baby's body into pieces.

Dilation and Curettage (D&C). This method is used up to 18 weeks of gestation. The abortionist uses a curette, a steel knife, to cut the baby into pieces so they can be removed.

Partial Birth (D&X). Used for "advanced pregnancies," the baby is partially removed from the womb so that about half of its little body is exposed with its legs hanging outside the woman's body. The abortionist then plunges scissors into the baby's head at the nape of the neck and spreads them open to kill the child. Its brain is then removed by suction before the lifeless body is removed entirely.

Salt Poisoning. This is used after 16 weeks. The abortionist injects a strong salt solution directly into the amniotic sac (the fluid surrounding the baby). As the baby breathes and swallows the solution, it is poisoned. It takes over an hour to kill the baby, with it struggling and convulsing during this time. Infants aborted in this manner are called “Candy Apple Babies,” because the corrosive effect of the salt exposes the raw, red, glazed-looking subcutaneous layer of skin and its head thus looks like a candy apple.

Prostaglandin Chemical Abortion. Drugs delivered through injection or suppository produces a violent labor and deliver of the child. Sometimes the baby is born alive, but it is too small to survive.

RU-486. This drug taken in pill form produces an abortion by not allowing the newly-implanted baby access to an essential hormonal nutrient. Ru-486 is used after the mother misses her period, at which stage the baby is at least two to three weeks old. This is old enough to have a beating heart.

The Bible forbids the abortion of an unborn child. Consider the following truths:

1. The Bible says that man is created in God’s image (Gen. 1:26). Man is not the product of blind naturalistic evolution, and he is not an animal that can be killed for convenience.

The doctrine of evolution has been a moving force behind the abortion industry, because it teaches that man is only an animal. In fact, the evolutionary doctrine of “recapitulation” claims that the embryo is not fully human until late in its growth stage.

This theory was popularized by Ernst Haeckel, Charles Darwin’s most prominent supporter in Germany. Haeckel taught that “ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny.” Ontogeny is the growth in the womb, and phylogeny is evolutionary development. The unborn child supposedly goes through a series of evolutionary stages from single cell to fish to amphibian to reptile to mammal to ape to human. Thus, the fetus only becomes human in its later stages. Haeckel produced drawings that showed that the human embryo is the same as that of animals such as a fish, a pig, and a monkey, but the drawings were fake. Haeckel mislabeled embryos; he changed the size of embryos; he deleted parts; he added parts; he changed parts. For example, he took a drawing of a monkey embryo and removed its arms, legs, navel, heart, and yolk sac to make it look like a fish embryo. He then labeled it “Embryo of a Gibbon in the fish-stage.” Haeckel’s theory has been totally disproved, but his drawings are still used in textbooks today. Haeckel’s myth has encouraged the modern abortion industry. In 1957, child psychologist Benjamin Spock wrote, “Each child as he develops is retracing the whole history of mankind, physically and spiritually, step by step. A baby starts off in the womb as a single tiny cell, just the way the first living thing appeared in the ocean. Weeks later, as he lies in the amniotic fluid of the womb, he has gills like a fish...” (*Baby and Child Care*, p. 223). In 1990, Carl Sagan and his wife argued that abortion is ethical on the grounds that the fetus is not fully human until the sixth month. Taking Haeckel’s recapitulation

theory as fact, they claimed that the embryo begins as “a kind of parasite” and changes into something like a fish with “gill arches” and then becomes “reptilian” and finally “mammalian.” By the end of the second month, the fetus “is still not quite human” (“The Question of Abortion: A Search for the Answers,” *Parade*, April 22, 1990).

2. God forbids man to shed innocent blood. Twenty times the Bible forbids the shedding of “innocent blood” (e.g., Deut. 19:10-13; 2 Kings 21:16). This refers to killing a person without a just cause (1 Sam. 19:5). To put a murderer to death, for example, is a just cause, but to kill an innocent person is unjust. God hates those who shed innocent blood (Prov. 6:16-17). What person is more innocent than an unborn child?

3. Modern science calls the unborn a “fetus,” but it is called a “child” in the Bible (Gen. 25:22). The child that dies before it is born is called an “infant” (Job 3:16). Therefore, to kill a “fetus” is to kill an infant child. The Bible says that children are distinct individuals even when they are in the womb. This was true of Esau and Jacob (Gen. 25:23). Jeremiah was called to be a prophet while he was still in the womb (Jer. 1:5), and John the Baptist was filled with the Spirit and responded to Christ while in the womb (Luke 1:15, 41-44).

4. The Law of Moses demanded punishment if an unborn baby was harmed (Ex. 21:22-23). The injury or death of an unborn child was treated as a serious crime.

5. The Bible says that God is in control of conception (Genesis 20:18; 29:31; 30:22). The Bible says children are the heritage of the Lord (Psalm 127:3). The child in the womb does not belong to the mother; it belongs to God.

6. The Bible says God forms the child in the womb (Psalm 139:13-16).

a. God possessed or fashioned David’s *reins* (Psa. 139:13).

(1) The word “reins” refers to the immaterial part of man, his heart, soul, and spirit. The term “reins” is closely associated with the “heart” and refers especially to man’s will, the seat of his desires, affections, and passions. See Psalm 16:7; 26:2; 73:21; Proverbs 23:16; Isaiah 11:5; Jeremiah 11:20; 17:10; 20:12; Revelation 2:23.

(2) This is God’s realm. Man doesn’t know enough about this to interfere. If an egg is fertilized for scientific research and the new life begins to grow and then is cut off, this means that a life made in God’s image has been extinguished. According to Psalm 139 it appears that the reins are already present in that newly conceived person even though its body has not yet formed. The Psalms teach us that man’s reins are possessed of God. They are formed by Him and owned by Him and return to Him at death (Ecc. 12:7). Let man beware!

- b. God fashioned David's body (Psa. 139:13-16). Here David thinks about the amazing complexity of his body and states that God is the author and should be praised for His works. "*I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well*" (Psa. 139:14). No other evidence for the existence of an almighty, all-wise Creator is needed than the fact of man's miraculous makeup.

(1) David was curiously wrought and fashioned in continuance (Psa. 139:15, 16). This is a wonderful description of how the infant grows in the womb, beginning with the microscopic fertilized egg. The statement that David was made "*in the lowest parts of the earth*" does not refer to places under the earth but to the womb itself. It is a poetic description of the womb as a dark, inaccessible place where man's eye does not penetrate. The Hebrew word translated "curiously wrought" (*raqam*) means "to variegate color, i.e. embroider; by implication, to fabricate" (Strong). It is elsewhere translated "needlework" (Ex. 26:36) and "embroiderer" (Ex. 38:23). Barnes comments: "It refers to the act of 'weaving in' various threads--as now in weaving carpets. The reference here is to the various and complicated tissues of the human frame--the tendons, nerves, veins, arteries, muscles, 'as if' they had been woven, or as they appear to be curiously interwoven. No work of tapestry can be compared with this; no art of man could 'weave' together such a variety of most tender and delicate fibres and tissues as those which go to make up the human frame, even if they were made ready to his hand: and who but God could 'make' them? The comparison is a most beautiful one; and it will be admired the more man understands the structure of his own frame" (Barnes). Alan Gillen, M.D., says, "The body is woven together just like a tapestry. For example, look at the interwoven complexity of a single skeletal muscle. ... Under the microscope, the amazing interwoven design manifests itself" (*Body by Design*, 2001, p. 8).

(2) A description of David's body was written in God's book before he was formed (Psa. 139:16). This amazing divine book of human blueprints apparently exists in heaven.

- c. In light of this Bible teaching, abortion is certainly murder. That child does not belong to the mother; it belongs to the Creator. A woman is not free to do with her body as she pleases because she is a created being and is accountable to God, and further, that infant in her womb is a separate body and a separate individual.

7. Idolaters killed their sons and daughters, and this was something that God hated (Psalm 106:38).

REVIEW QUESTIONS ON ABORTION

1. What is the shedding of innocent blood?
2. What passage says that God hates those who shed innocent blood?

3. What does the Bible call an unborn "fetus"?
 4. Who is in control of conception?
 5. Who forms man's soul?
 6. In what Psalm did David describe how God fashioned him in the womb?
 7. What did idolaters do to their children in Old Testament times?
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